Subject: Chat with Jonathan Farley
From: Jonathan Farley <lattice.theory@gmail.com>
To: barriticus@gmail.com

9:55 PM **me**: I gotta change locations, I'll be back online in ten
Jonathan: Anyway, Democrats who question Greene's nomination were nowhere to be found in 2000 or 2004.
Or worse, they were the ones urging Gore to concede.
OK.

34 minutes

10:29 PM **me**: anyway, in that piece I just sent you in support of LeGrow, I noted how he met with a black pastor who had originally been quoted in the press as saying he couldn't support him due to his atheism
Jonathan: Yes.
10:30 PM **me**: and then LeGrow met with him and he changed his mind
well, the campaign manager called him today and he's changed his mind again
bottom line is the only way to win this or at least force Republicans to spend more in this race in defense is to go heavily on attack
10:31 PM **Jonathan**: Yes, of course. But no Democrat has the guts.
Rachel Maddow made a similar point yesterday, although her idea of "attack" is also weak.
me: I know, that's why I'm not a Democrat
Jonathan: Neither am I.
me: or, one reason
Jonathan: Reason # 549
me: but at any rate all I do is attack and to the extent they'll use my material, great, and whatever they don't use I'll use
10:32 PM but I've never worked with a campaign before so if you have any ideas on how to get 4th district exposed to my attacks when LeGrow chooses not to use them, let me know
Jonathan: Anyway, as I wrote you, my colleagues and I can help Le Grow.
10:33 PM **me**: wonderful, would you like to get in touch with the campaign manager?
Jonathan: Outside of the accepted two parties, it's much harder.
Yeah, or perhaps, Mafia style, you could serve as a reference.
me: don't follow
Jonathan: It's who you know, not what you know.
10:34 PM So if you refer me to the campaign manager, he will listen
If I approach him, he won't listen or he'll Google and then run away.
me: right, that's what I meant, I'll suggest him to you
Jonathan: My plan is to have Ms. Warren write him anyway, to avoid the problems you wrote about in Chapter 6.

Ms. Donna Warren helped me when I got attacked.

10:35 PM She wrote an essay in the San Francisco Bay View, "I Support the Professor," or something like that.

There's a website consisting of a dozen attacks on her from neo-Confederates after she wrote that.

10:37 PM http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=828375

10:38 PM We can also help with speechwriting. That video on his website was dead boring.

10:39 PM One of our projects is Turn to the Left and Laugh: comedians help draft soundbites or actual speeches. We'd love to have you as one of the main people...

10:40 PM But that's not one of the ideas we'd mention to LeGrow until we got a formal agreement.

me: gotcha

10:41 PM I'd be happy to serve on that project, my main strength is rhetoric and my other main strength is comedy

10:42 PM so how should we introduce you to the campaign, do you want me to mention you and then have her write to them?

Jonathan: I observed. I don't read much outside of mathematics, but you're one of the funniest writers I have come across, and your book at the same time had a serious, almost philosophical point.

10:43 PM At first I thought your writing was Al Franken-meets-Douglas Adams, but it's deeper than both.

me: to the extent that LeGrow uses my speech segments or even lets me write an op-ed in his name, he'll at least have won over reasonable independents

10:44 PM insomuch as that my writing is non-ideological, in essence

Jonathan: Anyway, please mention to the campaign manager The Warren Group and that they should expect a letter and then a phone call from Ms. Warren.

me: Okay, I'll actually do that tonight

Jonathan: What I put in my email to you (not this chat), you can mention to the campaign manager.

me: then Donna can get in touch

Jonathan: But as I said, my name per se is best left out.

That's one reason it's "The Warren Group."

me: gotcha

yeah

Jonathan: But we can try for an op-ed.

10:45 PM Since he's not an actual congressman, it would be a bit harder to place it.

Also since his views are so conventional.

Maybe if he wrote about his atheism, but

as you indicate I'm not sure that's a winning issue.

me: don't introduce the comedy writing project unless you think any of the participants could do better than I could, as we probably have limited chances to

provide any material for his use and I want to make sure I can get some shots in
10:46 PM actually, his atheism

Jonathan: No, none of us are comedians and no comedian has had enough faith in the idea to join.
The way it would work is: we find comedians.
Everybody is willing to work if there is already a project.

me: that's something that may perhaps be still usable insomuch as that I think the voters are largely aware that he's an atheist already

Jonathan: Few are willing to expend the effort to get contracts.

10:47 PM **me**: turning a weakness into a strength may be the best strategy

Jonathan: Yeah, the atheism may generate other news coverage,
and The Guardian may find that sufficiently interesting.

me: I'd be inclined to use the fact that he told peoplke about this knowing it hurts his chances as a positive
an indicator that he's clearly a man of integrity

10:48 PM **Jonathan**: So let's draft something about atheism, possibly for The Guardian---but let's shoot first for The New York Times or something.
If we can make it really topical.

10:49 PM Actually, the New York Times won't run it.

me: at any rate, I think we need to think not in terms of winning, which may be impossible - I haven't seen any polls, but still - but rather in terms of advancing secularism, creating sympathy for him, and exposing LeGrow
sorry, exposing Forbes
why wouldn't NYT run it?

Jonathan: He's not a congressman, so he's not a celebrity guest columnist/

10:50 PM Also they change everything.
So all your jokes would disappear.

me: but he's the only atheist running for national office

Jonathan: Okay, good point. If that is what his essay is about, he has a chance.
Let's get on it...
"In God We Trust?"

10:52 PM **me**: let's see
they'll pick the title anyway
I think
I want to play up his integrity in admitting his atheism]

10:53 PM the unfortunate fact that this campaign became about atheism
which is not what LeGrow wanted
and then state that, at any rate, it is indeed about atheism to some large extent

10:54 PM then I would be inclined to tell about the black pastor who LeGrow met with

Jonathan: Okay, good point. If that is what his essay is about, he has a chance.
Let's get on it...
"In God We Trust?"

Maher might ask him to come on as well.
Lots of possibilities...

10:55 PM **me**: that's a good point, Maher
I've got a producer I'm working with out in LA
perhaps he could do something
he's already agreed to forward an e-mail I wrote, based on that Faster Times piece I showed you

10:56 PM **Jonathan**: Yeah, but LeGrow would have to do something bold and funny for Maher to have him on.
Maher is looking for an atheist with the charisma of RFK.

me: well, he doesn't have much charisma
and in fact it would take too long to get him on

Jonathan: No, but the essay could make it seem as if he would be a good guest.
I don't know: they bump people.

10:57 PM The essay could be written in two days, sent to The Guardian, and then brought to the attention of Maher's people.

me: well, go ahead and contact his campaign manager when you're ready, antoniomelias@gmail.com
I'm going to think about this and jot down some notes

10:58 PM also, this is low-dollar race in which $50 buys a 30-second ad spot

Jonathan: What??

me: yep
radio ad
got the numbers from Antonio the other day

10:59 PM **Jonathan**: Anyway, how about you work as part of The Warren Group on this---it's me, my brother Felipe, and Ms. Warren.

me: If you know of anyone who donates to races, this is the one to do it

Jonathan: http://www.donnawarren.com/
Although this website, while public, should probably not be shown to any mainstream Democrat, since it is Green!

11:00 PM That way the campaign manager will feel safer making a formal agreement with the Warren Group.
Then we can hatch our plots. I think comedy is definitely the way to go.

me: How long ago did you set up the Warren Group
?

Jonathan: I'm thinking a video of LeGrow, that begins, "I'm not a witch..."

11:01 PM **me**: and do you have a website?

Jonathan: This summer.
We are completing it.
Alvin Greene is our only client, but no one needs to know that, and you have to start somewhere.

me: you're voluntarily assisting Greene, I take it?

11:02 PM **Jonathan**: We have a formal agreement, but, yeah, it's pro bono...but that doesn't mean we want to work for everyone pro-bono. It depends on what we can get out of it. (My cynicism is a direct result of my situation being precarious.)

me: understood
what state are you in now again?

11:03 PM **Jonathan**: Maybe all we'd want is a formal agreement with LeGrow. I am in Maine, Ms. Warren is in LA, Felipe is in South Carolina.
Oh, also, no one needs to know we're working pro bono for Greene either...

6 minutes

11:10 PM **me**: sorry, was outside smoking
you had a piece in the Guardian, right?
and I imagine you still know who to contact over there

Jonathan: Yes, exaftly.
exactly

11:11 PM **me**: I'm going to ask if LeGrow is indeed willing to let us write a piece under his name - or, we could write a piece together with shared byline as his concerned advisors
let me ping Antonio

11:12 PM **Jonathan**: The second option interests me most if they aren't going to give us a formal agreement.

11:14 PM **me**: right

11:16 PM ok, I just talked to him via IM, he's given us the go-ahead to do a column in Wynne's name

11:17 PM **Jonathan**: That was fast.

me: now let's see if they'll agree to officially agreeing that your firm is helping them
yeah, he's on gmail
shows up on my gchat list
here's what I told him so far

me: just sent you transcript
me: so I guess go ahead and have her get in touch with Antonio
me: and also get in touch with your guy at Guardian to confirm
me: and meanwhile I'll start jotting down notes
Jonathan: Actually, they always want to see something first. So let's write the essay and then submit it.
me: okay
me: if they don't take it for some reason, there are plenty of other pubs and I've got contacts as well
Jonathan: Yes.
me: for instance, we should write a different version for HuffPo
me: later, though
me: first this

Jonathan: Yeah.
me: did I give you antonio's e-mail?
Jonathan: Yes.
me: okay, Antonio will agree to make your firm officially providing consultation to the campaign
Jonathan: Okay, I will still have Ms. Warren send a letter.
Jonathan: So he has agreed to this, or you think he will agree to this?
me: yeah, he's agreed
Jonathan: Okay. Thanks for the clarification.
me: Do you know what the word limit is on Guardian op-eds?
Jonathan: I've published pieces around 700-1200 words.
Jonathan: You can use Word to check the number of words in my submissions.
Jonathan: http://www.guardian.co.uk/profile/jonathandavidfarley
me: fuck, you've written a lot for them
me: do you write for HuffPo very often?
Jonathan: Only when in inspired, which is rarely.
Jonathan: when inspired
me: you make a good point on this piece about the "some dangerous black man carved a 'b' in my forehead" girl
me: she should have been charged